

Wilson, Erika

From: John Blair [jblair@ksu.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2013 11:33 AM
To: Lear, Gary
Subject: RE: Konza Prairie CASTNET site
Attachments: Remaining Issues for Konza Prairie CASTNET site_2.docx

Thanks for the info, Gary. I was told that Tom Gross of KDHE contacted John Briggs by phone shortly after your conference call with KDHE yesterday, and asked to schedule a meeting with Briggs and some other KSU personnel from the College of Agriculture who are involved with smoke management issues in the Flint Hills, to take place prior to the call with EPA next Thursday. I've suggested to John that he simply indicate to KDHE that KPBS and the Konza LTER program are not in a position to make a decision about terminating ozone monitoring at the Konza CASTNET site. That's something that needs to be worked out between KDHE and CASTNET/EPA.

I've provided a few comments on your draft summary of the key issues, which is attached here. I think this is an accurate summary of the KDHE's concerns, as I understand them, and our concerns about potential impacts on the CASTNET research program and our ability to freely conduct and support research at the Konza site.

If it were possible to substitute the regulatory monitoring aspects of the CASTNET with a replacement regulatory monitor in Manhattan, so that we could continue to support the CASTNET research mission at Konza, we would be in favor of that.

Hope this information is helpful. Please feel free to call if I can provide additional information.

John

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-----Original Message-----

From: Lear, Gary [mailto:Lear.Gary@epa.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2013 7:50 PM
To: John Blair
Subject: RE: Konza Prairie CASTNET site

John, We have until next Thursday at 2pm CDT to make a decision. I will ask Region 7 to invite you and John Briggs if you would like, but I still think there are advantages for you to remain on the sidelines.

I've attached a draft summary of the biggest issues as I see them (which ended up being just two) and would appreciate it if you could make sure that I've accurately characterized your concerns and answered some of your questions on what would happen if the site was determined to be out of attainment. I have not yet circulated this and would appreciate it if you kept it to yourself.

Since the consequences of non-attainment are significant, at this point my thinking is that the most graceful way out of this would be to agree that the site doesn't meet the siting requirements of a regulatory monitor and ask that KDHE install a replacement regulatory monitor in Manhattan. We would continue to collect ozone data at Konza, but it would not be used for attainment determinations. However, I am not sure that all parties within EPA will agree.

Best regards,

Gary

Gary Lear
Sr. Environmental Scientist
202-343-9159
USEPA/OAR/OAP/CAMD
Washington DC

-----Original Message-----

From: John Blair [mailto:jblair@ksu.edu]
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2013 7:54 PM
To: Lear, Gary
Subject: Re: Konza Prairie CASTNET site

Gary,

I spoke with John Briggs (Director of Konza Prairie Biological Station) again after we talked. We are both uncomfortable with shutting down the ozone monitoring site due to pressure from KDHE. We also feel that we don't really have enough information to make an informed decision about the consequences of not responding to the KDHE request. We were wondering if it would be possible to delay a decision on continuing ozone monitoring at the CASTNET site until we had additional information. For example, it would be useful to know what options exist for Manhattan and Riley County to respond to ozone exceedences measured at the Konza site, particularly if the county doesn't have local sources of ozone precursors that might be controlled. If it would be helpful, John and I could participate in a conference call with KDHE and EPA, though we would be unable to participate in the call tomorrow due to other obligations at that time. Just a thought...

John Blair

----- Original Message -----

From: "Gary Lear" <Lear.Gary@epa.gov>
To: jblair@k-state.edu
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2013 5:04:23 PM
Subject: Konza Prairie CASTNET site

Hi John, I just wanted to give you a heads up that I just found out this afternoon that the State of Kansas DHE informed EPA Region 7 office last week that they have been "in negotiation with TNC and Konza Prairie" about shutting the entire CASTNET site down if we don't turn off the ozone monitor at the site. This seems a rather extreme position, but we don't want to risk losing the site altogether or to cause trouble for you or the LTER. We have a call with them 10:30AM Tuesday where we expect they will demand an answer one way or another.

So, my question to you is whether you believe this is a credible threat, a bluff, or a risk that you'd just as soon not take. Any thoughts? Feel free to give me a call on my cell (301-270-7674) if you are so inclined. Given the short notice, if I don't hear from you we will likely agree to begin the process of removing the ozone monitor.

Best regards,

Gary

Gary Lear

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